

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-18 are pending. Claims 1, 3-5, 7 and 9 are currently amended. New claims 17 and 18 have been added. Claim 2 has been canceled.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. More specifically, the Office action states that it is not clear how to connect the plurality of transistor switches between the output of the logic gate and the control electrode of the driver transistor.

Claim 9 has been amended to clarify that the transistor switches are connected in parallel between the output of the logic gate and the control electrode of the driver transistor. An example of those features can be found in FIG. 5 where transistor switches T7a and T7b are connected in parallel between an output of logic gate NO and a control electrode of driver transistor Tx. *See also* page 14, line 21-page 15, line 11.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

As an initial matter, Applicant thanks the Examiner for recognizing that claims 2-8, 10, 11, 15 and 16 include allowable subject matter.

Claims 1 and 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,320,407 (Sakamoto).

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2.

Since the Examiner has recognized that claim 2 included allowable subject matter, claim 1, as amended, should now be allowable as well.

Claims 12-14 depend from claim 1 and, therefore, should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 9 also was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Sakamoto patent.

Claim 9, as amended, recites that transistor switches are connected in parallel between an output of the logic gate and a control electrode of the driver transistor. The Sakamoto patent does not disclose those features; nor would the claimed subject matter have been obvious in view of the Sakamoto patent.

The Sakamoto patent discloses a semiconductor circuit with an internal circuit 2, output circuits 4a, 4b, . . . 4n whose slew rate can be adjusted, a replicated gate 6, a pulse generator 5 for slew rate adjustment, and a switch unit 7. *See* FIGS. 1 and 2. The replicated gate 6 and output circuits 4a, 4b, . . . 4n respectively include a C-MOS circuit (with a P-type MOS transistor 103 and an N-type MOS transistor 104), two resistance setting units 100, 101, and an N-type MOS transistor 107. A pulse for slew rate adjustment is input to the commonly-connected gates of both transistors 103 and 104 forming the C-MOS circuit.

The Office action indicates that Sakamoto's MOS transistors 103, 104 correspond to the claimed "logic gate" and that Sakamoto's transistor 107 corresponds to the claimed "driver transistor." Even if that were true, which Applicant does not concede, the Sakamoto circuit does not have "transistor switches connected in parallel between" the output of MOS transistors 103, 104 and a control electrode of transistor 107, as recited in claim 1. Instead, in Sakamoto, transistors 103, 104 are connected directly to transistor 107. There are no transistor switches therebetween at all, and certainly not transistor switches connected in parallel.

Therefore, there is no disclosure of "transistor switches connected in parallel between the output the logic gate and a control electrode of the driver transistors" as recited in claim 9, and the subject matter of that claim is not rendered obvious by the cited references.

Claim 9 should be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

New claim 18 represents claim 10 rewritten in independent form. The Examiner recognized that claim 10 included allowable subject matter.

New claim 18 should be allowable for at least that reason.

Drawings

The Office action indicated that Figures 9-12 should be designated by a legend such as -- Prior Art--.

Applicant has complied with that request. Two corrected drawing sheets are enclosed.

The Office action objected to the drawings, indicating that the drawings must show every feature of the claims. In response, Applicant has enclosed new drawing sheets that include FIGS. 13-22. No new matter has been added.

New FIGS. 13-16 show features recited in claim 4. Those features also are discussed, for example, at page 7, line 22-page 8, line 4.

New FIGS. 17, 18, 21 and 22 show features recited in claims 14 and 16. Those features also are discussed, for example, at page 21, lines 15-19.

FIGS. 19 and 20 show features recited in claim 11. Those features also are discussed, for example, at page 15, lines 12-17.

Applicant also has amended the "Brief Description of drawings" section of the specification to add brief descriptions of each new figure.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the drawing objections.

Conclusion


It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above

may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Enclosed is a Petition for Extension of Time. The petition fee in the amount of \$1,050.00 is being paid concurrently herewith on the Electronic Filing System (EFS) by way of Deposit Account Authorization. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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